

S/N 10/038,766
Ref. No.: 659-919

REMARKS

In an Office Action mailed October 6, 2004, the Examiner rejected claims 15 and 16 (1) under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,620,276 to Kuntze and (2) under 35 USC 103 as being made obvious over U.S. Patent No. 4,941,939 to Numura in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,726,876 to Tomsovic or U.S. Patent No. 4,617,082 to Oschefsky. The Examiner also rejected claim 21 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,847,710 to Blomqvist.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's statement that claims 2, 3, 6-8 and 17-20 are allowable. Applicants submit that claims 15, 16 and 21 are also allowable for the reasons set forth below.

Claims 15 and 16:

Claim 15 recites that the outer surface of the web conveyor includes "at last one recessed portion having a *bottom surface* for accommodating at least one portion of each of the discrete parts that is relatively thicker than the other portions of each of the discrete parts." In contrast, Kuntze does not disclose or suggest any bottom surface in the recessed portion (see Figure 1; "a web loop 101 is formed between adjacent support plates 20" Col. 3, lines 17-21). Accordingly, Kuntze does not disclose or suggest all of the recitations of claim 15 and the Examiner's rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim 15 further recites that the "outer surface of said web conveyor including at least one recessed portion having a bottom surface for accommodating at least one portion of each of the discrete parts that is relatively thicker than other portions of each of the discrete parts." In contrast, the recess of Nomura, as applied by the Examiner, accommodates the web, but *not* the discrete elastic bands 12 (Col. 4, lines 7-54; FIGS. 1-5). Rather, the bands are applied to the web on opposite sides of the recess such that they will have a certain orientation once the web is flattened (Col. 5,

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lines 10-20; FIG. 8). Moreover, the discrete parts do not have any portion that is thicker than another portion, let alone that such a portion is accommodated by the recess. Applicants note that the Examiner cited Tomsovic and Oshefsky only for the disclosure of the transfer member. Accordingly, those references do not supply any of the deficiencies of Nomura.

For all of these reasons, claims 15 and 16 are allowable and notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Claim 21:

The Examiner has asserted that “the edges of the recess surface are substantially normal to the axis of rotation” in Blomqvist. Applicants have now clarified that the “carrier body is rotatable about an axis substantially normal to said *bottom* surface of said recessed portion.” In contrast, the carrier body of Blomqvist is rotated about an axis *parallel* to the convex *bottom* surface (see Figure 1 of Blomqvist). Put another way, the rotation axis of Blomqvist is not normal, i.e. perpendicular, to any portion of the *bottom* surface of the recessed portion. Accordingly, claim 21 should also be passed to allowance.

CONCLUSION:

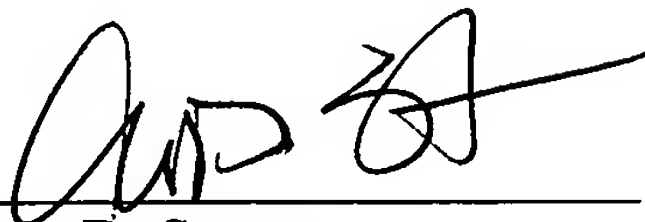
No fees are believed to be due in connection with this amendment. If for any reason this application is not considered to be in condition for allowance and an interview would be helpful to resolve any remaining issues, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney at (312) 321-4713.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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